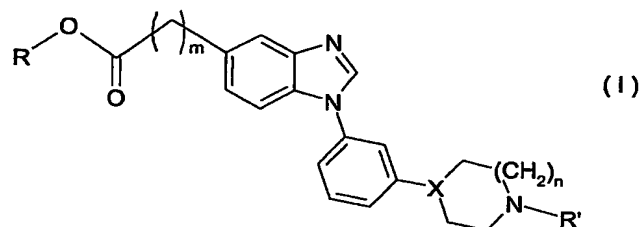


Claims

1. A compound of general formula I:



- 5 or an N-oxide thereof, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein R represents alkyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, R^aR^bN -alkyl, R^aR^bN -CO-alkyl, or phenyl-alkyl;
 wherein R^a and R^b independently of each other represents hydrogen or alkyl;
- 10 R' represents alkoxyalkyl, alkoxyalkenyl, alkoxyalkynyl, alkylcarbonylalkyl, alkenyl, or alkynyl;
 m is 0 or 1;
 n is 1 or 2;
 X represents N or CH.
- 15 2. The compound of claim 1, wherein n is 1 and X represents N.
3. The compound of claim 1, wherein n is 1 and X represents CH.
- 20 4. The compound of any one of claims 1-3, wherein R represents alkyl, hydroxyalkyl, or alkoxyalkyl.
- 25 5. The compound of any one of claims 1-3, wherein R represents R^aR^bN -alkyl, R^aR^bN -CO-alkyl, or phenyl-alkyl;
 wherein R^a and R^b independently of each other represents hydrogen, methyl or ethyl.
- 30 6. The compound of any one of claims 1-5, wherein R' represents alkoxyalkyl.

7. The compound of any one of claims 1-5, wherein
R' represents alkylcarbonylalkyl, alkenyl, or alkynyl.
8. The compound of claim 1, which is
 - 5 2-Methoxyethyl 1-(3-(4-(ethoxyethyl)-1-piperazinyl)-phenyl)-benzimidazole-5-carboxylate (1a);
 - 2-Hydroxyethyl 1-(3-(4-(ethoxyethyl)-1-piperazinyl)-phenyl)-benzimidazole-5-carboxylate (1b);
 - n*-Butyl 1-(3-(4-(ethoxyethyl)-1-piperazinyl)-phenyl)-benzimidazole-5-carboxylate (1c);
 - 10 *iso*-Butyl 1-(3-(4-(ethoxyethyl)-1-piperazinyl)-phenyl)-benzimidazole-5-carboxylate (1d);
 - 2-Methoxyethyl 1-(3-(4-(methoxyethyl)-1-piperazinyl)-phenyl)-benzimidazole-5-carboxylate (1e);
 - 15 2-Hydroxyethyl 1-(3-(4-(methoxyethyl)-1-piperazinyl)-phenyl)-benzimidazole-5-carboxylate (1f);
 - n*-Butyl 1-(3-(4-(methoxyethyl)-1-piperazinyl)-phenyl)-benzimidazole-5-carboxylate (1g);
 - iso*-Butyl 1-(3-(4-(methoxyethyl)-1-piperazinyl)-phenyl)-benzimidazole-5-carboxylate (1h);
 - 20 5-(methoxycarbonylmethyl) 1-(3-(4-(methoxyethyl)-1-piperazinyl)-phenyl)-benzimidazole (1i);
 - 5-(2-hydroxyethoxycarbonylmethyl) 1-(3-(4-(methoxyethyl)-1-piperazinyl)-phenyl)-benzimidazole (1j);
 - 25 2-Methoxyethyl 1-(3-(4-(propargyl)-1-piperazinyl)-phenyl)-benzimidazole-5-carboxylate (8a);
 - 2-Methoxyethyl 1-(3-(4-(allyl)-1-piperazinyl)-phenyl)-benzimidazole-5-carboxylate (8b);
 - 2-Methoxyethyl 1-(3-(4-(2-oxo-propyl)-1-piperazinyl)-phenyl)-benzimidazole-5-carboxylate (8c);
 - 30 2-Methoxyethyl 1-(3-(1-methoxyethyl-4-piperidinyl)-phenyl)-benzimidazole-5-carboxylate (8d);
 - 2-Hydroxyethyl 1-(3-(4-(propargyl)-1-piperazinyl)-phenyl)-benzimidazole-5-carboxylate (8e);
 - 35 Benzyl 1-(3-(4-(ethoxyethyl)-1-piperazinyl)-phenyl)-benzimidazole-5-carboxylate (10a);
 - Methylcarbamoylmethyl 1-(3-(4-(ethoxyethyl)-1-piperazinyl)-phenyl)-benzimidazole-5-carboxylate (10b);

- Ethylcarbamoylmethyl 1-(3-(4-(ethoxyethyl)-1-piperazinyl)-phenyl)-benzimidazole-5-carboxylate (**10c**);
2-Dimethylaminoethyl 1-(3-(4-(ethoxyethyl)-1-piperazinyl)-phenyl)-benzimidazole-5-carboxylate (**10d**);
5 Benzyl 1-(3-(4-(methoxyethyl)-1-piperazinyl)-phenyl)-benzimidazole-5-carboxylate (**10e**);
Methylcarbamoylmethyl 1-(3-(4-(methoxyethyl)-1-piperazinyl)-phenyl)-benzimidazole-5-carboxylate (**10f**);
Ethylcarbamoylmethyl 1-(3-(4-(methoxyethyl)-1-piperazinyl)-phenyl)-benzimidazole-5-carboxylate (**10g**);
10 2-Dimethylaminoethyl 1-(3-(4-(methoxyethyl)-1-piperazinyl)-phenyl)-benzimidazole-5-carboxylate (**10h**);
or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.
- 15 9. A pharmaceutical composition containing a therapeutically effective amount of a compound according to any one of claims 1-8, or an N-oxide thereof, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, together with at least one pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, excipient or diluent.
- 20 10. The use of a compound according to any one of claims 1-8, or an N-oxide thereof, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, for the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment, prevention or alleviation of a disease or a disorder or a condition of a mammal, including a human, which disease, disorder or condition is responsive to modulation of the GABA receptor complex.
- 25 11. The use according to claim 10, wherein the medicament is for inducing anaesthesia, pre-anaesthesia, muscle relaxation, or sedation, or for treatment, prevention or alleviation of fewer cramps or status epilepticus.
- 30 12. A method for treatment, prevention or alleviation of a disease or a disorder or a condition of a living animal body, including a human, which disorder, disease or condition is responsive to modulation of the GABA receptor complex, which method comprises the step of administering to such a living animal body in need thereof a therapeutically effective amount of a compound according to any one of claims 1-8, or
35 an N-oxide thereof, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.